

THE
UNIVERSITY MAGA.
No. VII.

You may kiss,
Exactly as you please or not, the rod,
But if you dont, we'll lay it on, by G—d.

Price *Thursday, February 19, 1835.* **3d.**

THE STUDENTS' LITERARY PRIZE.

(*Continued from our Last.*)

Now again we have the decision of the Prize delayed long beyond the time appointed, which was December 1834, if we mistake not, and not a word has been communicated to the Students by the Committee; we would have inquired of them, but that we actually are not acquainted with the name of a single member of it, so little have they been before us; we hope this will call their attention to the subject. There can only be two excusable reasons for the delay alluded to, one that the meritorious essays are so equal, that it is almost impossible to give the preference to any one, the other reason may be, that, as last year, no essay is deemed worthy of the Prize. The first, however much we might wish such to be the case, is extremely improbable; we fear the last is the real reason, but one or the other scarcely warrants the declaration of it being put off so long; it will be so late in the Session soon, that in case a new subscription be required, it will be difficult to raise it. If it be true, indeed, that no essay is again worthy of the Prize, we hope

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such a subject will be set, as will excite the interest, and stimulate the exertions, of the clever, though seemingly lazy, part of this University; for we will never believe, that among fifteen hundred Students, there are none capable of writing a first-rate essay; no, there must be, there are some amongst us who will redeem the honour of the University of Edinburgh. What would be thought of us were the circumstance known to our sister Universities? What, shall it be said that there has been for three years a forty-guinea Prize offered in Edinburgh for the best Literary Essay, the competition open indiscriminately to all Students of the College, and that, for two successive years, not one has been found capable of winning it. This speaks ill indeed for the present intellectuality of the University, whatever it may have been once, and truly it may well make Alma ashamed of her sons.

We hope and trust this will arouse the dormant energies of some slumbering genius. Many, we know, are deterred from writing, because, although they have confidence enough to think they could gain the Prize, yet would think it beneath them to send in an essay, which would not be of itself, independent of gaining a Prize, capable of doing credit to them. Such a reasoning is, no doubt, honourable, but, at the same time, considering the small space of time given, unless one be already prepared by extensive reading, and almost master of the subject when it is proposed, it is scarcely possible to achieve a complete work, or such a one as would permanently satisfy the author. Therefore, it is almost incumbent upon an individual who could write a good essay, although not such a one as he might, perhaps, had he more time to go into all branches of the subject, to do his best at all events, and prevent this College from becoming the jeer and bye-word of all other Universities. We hope our words will not fall like the seeds upon the bare rock, to be blown away by the wind, but take root and produce good fruit.

It is plain that this unwillingness to write we have just spoken of, arises from the unfitness of the subjects given. On this point we have a few observations to offer. Our objections to the former subjects are these, but being confine

by want of space, we must state them as briefly as possible. The first, “The Philosophy of the Stoics,” is a very noble one, and though hacknied, still we are of opinion an original view may yet be taken of it; but this is not to be accomplished with a mere smattering of the different philosophies, and a stringing together of the received phrases, and cant opinions copied from commentators on ancient philosophy, who themselves copied previous copiers. A thorough knowledge of ancient and modern systems, acquired in the originals, is necessary, so as to weigh their merits in a just scale, and enable us to decide on the superiority of one over the other, in its good results on mankind, by comparison. Is such a knowledge to be acquired, or even digested, in five or six months? The same objection, viz., of too much extensiveness, lies against the two other subjects also. With regard to “The influence of the discovery of America on the European Nations,” we doubt whether, after the laborious and somewhat technical investigation required to trace its results, there would be matter enough for a purely philosophical essay. We anticipated the failure, and we are borne out in this, that the essays, instead of being philosophical commentaries, (for such we deem the proper term, and D’Israeli’s, on the Reign of Charles I., in some parts, may be cited as an example,) were mere transcripts of history. But to treat well “The Philosophy of the Roman History,” though there is no lack of matter there, it is imperative to have at command, the laws, literature, and social system, not only of the Romans, but of half the globe; a thorough knowledge of ancient and modern history, to draw parallels, and explain effects which are felt now from causes which operated about two thousand years ago, more or less. We do not insist on the difficulty of producing anything original on a subject so often treated, though we have heard that stated as an objection, but we have no faith in it; in truth, a proper treatise on it is a desideratum, and commentaries on their literature, laws, and manners, are among the latest productions of the press.

(*To be concluded in our next.*)

SONNET TO C——D—SILL—Y,

*On his Appearing at the Rainbow in the Character
of an Oyster.*

Oyster of poets ! mighty bard of oysters !
 Who from Parnassus came, to glad the sea
 With the sweet sounds of Vallery's minstrelsy,
 And thron'd amid the Rainbow's radiant cloisters,
 Proclaim'd the awful feat mid clamours boist'rous,
 And loud applause and joyous revelry,
 For who would not be glad and gay when he,
 The Author of "Chamouni," in attire
 Of knight Maltesian, stood before the throng
 Of wondering mortals, telling how *his* song
 The nations had astonished with *its* fire,
 And echoed had been by the Heavenly choir
 Of muses, who in Helicon combine
 To sing the bard of shellfish—great Charles Doyne !

THE *LAST* No. OF "THE MED. AND QUIZ."

The Med. and Quiz. has at length sent out its dying speech and confession, and, though we wish not to triumph over a fallen enemy, (rival it never was,) yet we think it right to pronounce a funeral eulogy over dying Snobbie, to praise what is praiseable, to censure what is censurable. The last number, like the flare-up of an expiring taper, was the best of the set ; and we must say, that we feel some sorrow, at seeing the poor thing sink at the very moment of improvement. It is chiefly occupied with a report of the meeting of Saturday week ; but there are a few articles to which we would advert. We must agree with the remarks on the want of support of periodicals in the University, and the stinginess of the Students of Edinburgh. Of the many periodicals which have appeared within a few years back, such as the *Lapsus Linguae*, *Heliconian Gazette*, *Gollege Observer*, *University Magazine*, *Nemo*, *Anti-nemo*, *Squib*, and *University Journal*, three only have existed an entire

Session, viz., the first, the third, and the fourth; whether the first paid its expenses we cannot say; the third barely did so; the fourth did not. All varieties of style and matter were tried to ensure success; in the first, second, and fifth, there was fun for a few coppers; in the sixth and seventh they had personality for ditto; in the third, they had serious literature for ditto; in the fourth they had an excellent literary magazine for a shilling; in the fifth mentioned, they had literature and science for sixpence: and these too at all manner of periodical issuing, weekly, twice a week, once a fortnight, monthly. Nothing would do. This Session we have seen two new experiments tried; the Medical and Quizzical Journal, endeavouring to interest the Students of Medicine, by reports of cases; the Maga combining the attractions of the pencil with the pen—each for a few pence. The first has confessedly failed; and the Maga has not been supported as it should have been, though perhaps numbering more purchasers than any of its predecessors. Aggrieved are we to say, that owing to our having introduced a serious article in our Journal last week, many have thought fit to withdraw their support; but we are determined, nevertheless, to continue in the same course, for we have matter before us which we conceive must interest the University. What is the cause of this apparent lukewarmness on the part of the Students? Is it want of merit in the Journals? We have heard a few consummate asses, whose reading is confined to the Dublin Dissector, and an occasional Novel, say so, but who thinks of asking their opinion? the intellectual part of the Students can testify, that it is not want of merit. Is it want of readers? This we deny, since every student about College is familiar, even to recitation, with the contents of each number as it comes out. It is want of purchasers! Though the price be but a few pence, yet will our beneficent brethren depute one out of every fifty to buy a number, in order that all may read. They enjoy, but will not pay for their enjoyment.

But we have strayed sadly from the Med. and Quiz., in thus expounding the causes of its failure. To return to its last number. After some reports of the Royal Infirmary, (the best feature of their Journal,) follow articles on "Intrusions during operations," "The Royal Medical Society," and the "Anatomical Society." With the sentiments herein expressed we entirely agree, especially in the censure of the Management of the Medical, and had it not been so late in the Session, we should have printed for the sake of freshmen, an exposure of their code of laws, but we promise to do so in our first number next Session. We were not aware that Vegetable Anatomy was an object of the Anatomical Society. The report of the meeting in the Waterloo Rooms, though correct in the larger speeches, is incorrect as to those parts supplied by the Editor, and we are astonished at the improper and ungentlemanly manner, in which this report is made a vehicle for the Editor's petty spites. This proves it is in vain to attempt to "thwart nature's stubborn plan," and the Editor *malgre lui* shows what family he belongs to, viz., that of snobs not quibblers, as he has most absurdly misunderstood us, see his page 48, and our last number page 8. Twice has he misrepresented, to all appearance wilfully, the remarks of Mr Forbes. We will take no notice of the sneer in page 42, for every one appreciates that sort of thing at its proper value; but it is necessary to expose the untruth of the statement, in page 46, attributing political motives to that gentleman, in his opposition to the motion that Mr Wakley be memorialized, and representing him as using such expressions, as "that Mr Wakely was a Radical:" "Hated Radicals," &c., wholly at variance with his former remarks, deprecating the introduction of politics in the discussion. His objections were, "that the measure proposed was unnecessary, and that if Mr Wakley would not support the prayer of the petition of his own free will, he was not worth memorializing." There was no reference made to Mr Wakley's politics. On several other points, the report is incorrect, but we have not room to dilate farther upon it.

ODES AND ADDRESSES TO
GREAT PEOPLE ABOUT COLLEGE.

No. VI.

TO THE PROFESSOR OF CIVIL LAW.

O ! thou of Civil Law Professor !
 Pet wit of Alma Mater, (bless her !)
 Father of jokes, and first-born son
 Of that most reverent spirit, fun !
 'Tis odd that though we have been writing
 Full many an ode and merry song,
 Some sweet, and others sharp and biting,
 We should have left thee out so long.

Yet if we talk of things forensic,
 We run a risk of making men sick,
 For all men vote law to the devil,
 Be it Common Law or Civil ;
 Therefore we will not (though we're able,)
 Sing of thy qualities Professional,
 But praise thy wit, which more laudable
 Is, than all powers so Court of Sessional.

Men call thee Cheape, yet *we*, the Magi,
 Who look on all things with a sage eye,
 Hold thee as *dear*,—dear to the College,
 Dearer to us, for in this dull age,
 When wit is scarce, pretentions plenty,
 We hail with joy, a Star so glorious,
 Amongst Professors seven and twenty,
 (One only out,) most *meritorious* !

OUR GALLERY.

_____Nox
 Semper_____ *Virgil, Georg. I., 247.*
 _____Knox
 For ever_____ *Maga, No. VII. p. 8.*

Behold this week, Knox, that hater of humbug, and who stands preeminent as one of the most scientific anatomists of his age. Behold him with his most knowing look, just observing, remarking, and perceiving, upon some favourite theory of his, or applying to some mortal or other the keen edge of his sarcasm. Perhaps he is merely observing, that Sir Charles Bell makes very great mistakes; or quietly insinuating that C—g— is cracked; but whatever he is saying, has said, or will say, through good report and ill, we aver him to be the best scientific Lecturer here, who infuses genius into every subject, and merits well of his pupils by his continual exertions; without doubt, the shining light of the Anatomical School of Edinburgh!

OUR CORRESPONDENTS.

A letter waits for our friend "K X Z," at our Publisher's.

"Sir Walter Scott's Redivivus" composition, is an excellent argument in favour of the Doctrine of Transmigration of Souls; for in reading it, we feel assured, that the great genius' living representative is an ass.

We thank "J. L," for his Sketch.

We must again leave out our Notice to "Student of ——," from want of room.

ERRATUM IN OUR LAST.

P. 3, line 31, for *was*, read *were*.

Communications for the Editor, to be sent, (post paid,) to RICHARD WESTON & SON, Booksellers, 37, Lothian Street, and 49, Nicolson Street, of whom a few copies of the preceding Nos. may be had.



